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Thesis

HERMANN HESSE'S INTERPRETATION OF ADOLESCENT BOYHOOD

by

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Hermann Hesse's Interpretation of Adolescent Boyhood.

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IV. Bibliography

I. Hermann Hesse (1877-) is one of the most outstanding of the contemporary German novelists. He is known as the writer of many charming poems and delightful travel sketches. His short stories are among the gems of all literature.

Hesse is first of all a poet, then a philosopher. His love of nature, his pantheistic conception of the power of the natural world to draw one to itself, his treatment of the mystical, his rhythmic language, all reveal the poet. On the other hand, his sincere striving for self-expression, his all-absorbing quest to "find himself," to understand the sources of human reactions and the well-springs of human emotions, form the basis of a well-conceived philosophy of life.

He tells his stories simply and naturally, with none of the consciously scientific character-dissecting common to modern writers. This simplicity is due in part to his lyrical style and to the unaffectedness of his language, and in part to the type of situations he chooses to depict. His characters are largely people of the village, naive and elemental in their reactions, untouched by the sophistication of modern urban society. Because of this elemental character, his stories are universal in their appeal.

There are many extremely effective descriptions of nature, of the woods and hills, the coming spring, of beautiful gardens and charming country-sides. Apparently a great lover of nature, Hesse makes one feel with him the delightful laziness of a warm summer sun or the thrill of danger with the oncoming of

a wild storm.

Hesse's humor is of the gentle, subtle kind, never studied or conscious. It is the sort of humor that makes one smile sometimes, but never laugh. It often consists merely in a quaint use of words or in the kindly disclosure of some elemental human weakness.

However, a large part of Hesse's greatness lies in the fact of his keen understanding of human nature, especially of the sensitive poetic nature. His writings show that he has probed into the very recesses of his own heart, in order to discover and disclose the motive forces that lie back of such a nature. Most of his works are basically autobiographical. In the struggles of his characters to meet the situations of life, he depicts his own conflicts, his yearnings, and his strivings for self-expression.

Many of his characters are in their adolescent years, or at some time in the story, at least, they pass through this trying period. Hesse's pictures of these youthful characters reveal a deep understanding of child psychology.

II. While psychologists agree that the advent of adolescence brings with it no sudden break in the child's system of reacting to his environment, that throughout the formative years there is a continuous, unbroken process of molding and adjusting, nevertheless adolescence differs from the previous periods of development in the extent to which certain traits are emphasized or subordinated, to which certain emotions are powerful or subdued, and to which certain tendencies appear and others disappear. There are traits which every individual manifests to a greater or less degree and tendencies which influence our reactions to the situations of life. Some of these appear more strongly in childhood, some in adolescence, and some do not appear to any marked degree until adulthood.

The young adolescent has left the world of childhood and has not yet entered the world of adulthood. He is passing through a period of transition, no longer a child nor yet a man. Before he reaches maturity he must discard many of his childish tendencies; he must adjust himself to a life of independence. This adjustment comes gradually. It is a learning process and is accompanied by many conflicting and often inconsistent emotions. The child looks to its parents for all the necessities of life, for inspiration and encouragement, for a working model by which to shape his behavior. The adult must look to no one but himself for his solutions to the problems of life. Nature endows the young adolescent with a set of instinctive tendencies which, if properly trained and directed,

aid in this preparation for adulthood.

There are many personality traits which are found to a greater or less degree in every individual. Some of these traits or tendencies appear more prominently during the adolescent period than at any other time, and in some youths more strongly than in others. The sensitive, subjective type of child manifests them to a more marked degree than the less "mental" type, The characters in the stories of Hermann Hesse are almost without exception of this sensitive type. The hearty, robust, noisy child who delights in the rough, natural play of childhood, who finds in the "gang" the companionship which he craves and in their activities an outlet for the exercise of his young animal vitality, who finds in association with other children a satisfying medium for self-expression--such a child is utterly ignored in Hesse's writings.

Since Hesse is himself a poet, endowed with the poet's sensitive, imaginative temperament, it is not strange that many of his characters possess these same characteristics. The poet's world is not a world of every-day realities. It is a world in which the emotions are given full sway, in which one dreams and is often lost in his dreams. Hesse's young adolescents reflect the dreamy, poetic soul of their creator. They are idealistic, subjective to the point of introversion, torn by the violence of their emotions. Some of them are able to bring their sensitive personalities into harmony with the hard, unyielding forces of life. Many of them, however, fail to make so difficult an adjustment and are lost by the wayside. All of them, since they are of so emotional a nature, manifest to a

marked degree the emotional personality traits of adolescence.

The normal adolescent is idealistic. Later, when the hard experiences of life have dimmed the brightness of his faith in humanity, he loses much of this idealism. But these experiences have not yet touched the life of the average adolescent.

Because he is idealistic, he would like to see a better world about him. He is therefore often inspired to help make the world better and the spirit of reform fills him with enthusiasm. He sees in the lives of men and women about him, as well as in the characters of history, such traits as the world needs to further this amelioation, and a tendency to hero-worship grows strong within him. He finds perfection in religion and in the symbolic and he is fascinated by them, since they offer him an ideal toward which to strive. So the normal adolescent is naturally religious.

The years between childhood and adulthood are often marked by intense inner conflicts. New emotions arise which the child does not understand. His life through childhood has been a sheltered, closely directed one. His duty has been clearly defined by his parents and obedience to this duty has been demanded. With the coming of adolescence the child feels within him new urges and new desires. Chief among these is the instinctive urge for freedom from the confining bonds of childhood. He begins to rebel against the authority of his parents, though this rebellion may be carefully concealed. Thus a conflict of desires arises; the desire to be obedient to his parents, whom he loves, struggles

within him against the newly-felt desire to be released from their authority. In a child such as those portrayed by Hesse such a conflict is many times a serious one. The boy does not understand that this feeling of rebellion against domination is merely a natural desire for self-expression, an instinctive urge to be an independent being. Instead he is inclined to worry about it, to think that there is something wrong with him. Thus a feeling of inferiority is built up; as compared with his all-too-perfect parents he is a miserable, ungrateful, disobedient child.

To offset this feeling of inferiority the individual builds up a set of compensations. He may resort to day-dreams in which he creates fictional situations to defend his acts. He may become a martyr, misunderstood and misjudged. He may imagine himself to be a hero, successful and admired by those who, in reality, he feels, look down upon him. In his day-dreams he appropriates to himself those qualities which he lacks in real life and which he deems so desirable.

An emotional attitude often found in adolescence is that of fear; fear for the future, fear of the conflicting emotions within him, "Angst vor seinem Gewissen," as Hesse so aptly states. These fears are quite different from the fears of childhood; they are inspired from within rather than from without, and have their basis in the individual's own thoughts. The average adolescent is able to cope with these fears through the give-and-take process of adjustment in his contacts with other youths. But to the sensitive, subjective

child these fears often assume overwhelming proportions.

Among the emotions ushered in by adolescence are those based upon the newly-awakened sex instinct. The control of these emotions through the period of adolescence constitutes one of the great problems of youth.

In his novel, Demian, Hesse depicts in his most charming manner the life of the adolescent boy, Emil Sinclair. As a child of ten years, Emil had been conscious of the existence of two distinct "worlds"; the world of home, parents, sisters, a world of love, gentleness, order, discipline, good conscience, and dignity, "die lichte Welt." The other world was that beyond his parents' doors, a world of mystery, fascination, allurements, adventure, and crime, "die dunkle Welt." For the first few years of his life his contact with this second world was limited to the realization of its existence and an occasional glimpse into its mysteries. However, at the age of eleven or twelve years he was introduced into its life. A lie, which he swore was the truth, put him into the power of an older boy, who demanded that Emil steal from his parents in order to pay him off. Thus the child set out on a career of what was to him secret sin, of enslavement to the bully, Franz, of secrecy from his parents, of guilt, loneliness, and separation from the goodness of the "lichte Welt." Because he could manage to pay only a little at a time, much of which he was forced to steal, Emil was kept under the domination of Franz and in a constant state of fear and dread. His health suffered; his family could not understand what had come over the boy. He longed to tell them, but that was impossible. He belonged to another world and was hopelessly lost in its entanglements.

Another lad, Demian, was the means of freeing Emil from the power of Franz over him. While his release from Franz and his return to the "lichte Welt" brought to Emil the happiest

moments of his childhood, he felt little gratitude to Demian. He explains that there were two reasons for this lack of gratitude: because Demian was a member of the "other" world from which he had so joyfully sought refuge in the warmth of family life, and because Demian demanded that he learn to know and understand himself, be true to his ideals and loyal to the leadings of his nature. The easier thing was to become more dependent, more childlike, in the easy life of the home. So, for a time, he yielded to the temptation of renewed dependence upon his parents. "Ach, das weiss ich heute," he writes, "nichts auf der Welt ist dem Menschen mehr zuwider als den Weg zu gehen, der ihn zu sich selber führt."[1]

As a youth in his early "teens", Emil lived "das Doppelleben des Kindes, das doch kein Kind mehr ist."[2] Assailed by the dreams, desires, curiosities, and temptations of youth, he was led, in his thoughts at least, beyond the doors of the "lichte Welt", to lose his way in the "dunkle Welt." Again it was Demian who led him back to himself, to a new understanding of life and a new hope.

After his confirmation Emil was sent away to school. He soon fell in with some boys who spent much of their time drinking and carousing. Although miserable at heart, Emil assumed an air of self-confidence and superiority to the demands of his parents and of his own nature, and he refused to change his ways even when his heart was broken by his mother's

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1. Demian, p 74
2. Demian, p 76

tears and his father's grief. He had reached the place where he no longer cared what became of him when he saw a girl who, he was sure, was his ideal. He never spoke to her, but she became his "Beatrice". He changed his course of living completely, conforming all his actions, as far as possible, to what he considered worthy of Beatrice. He undertook to paint her picture and the painting became his idol. Its expression captivated him; he spent long hours in rapt contemplation; he worshipped his interpretation of his ideal. However, it did not look much like Beatrice. One day it seemed suddenly to resemble Demian. Then he knew that it was neither Demian nor Beatrice he had attempted to portray; it was himself.

His life from that time on resolved itself into one all-absorbing quest, the search for a means of self-expression along the lines demanded by his own nature. He felt that the one great task of each individual is "sich selbst zu suchen, in sich fest zu werden, den einigen Weg vorwärts zu tasten, einerlei wohin er führte."

In the youth Emil, Hesse has portrayed many of the personality traits of adolescence. The coming of adolescence brought with it a new desire for independence. The "dunkle Welt" was to him a symbol of this freedom and it held much fascination for him. But once caught in its snares he was assailed by intense emotional conflicts. Two sets of allegiances struggled with one another for supremacy. To his parents he owed his confidence and obedience; to Franz, who represented the "other" world, he owed a new loyalty. This

conflict brought so severe a mental strain upon the lad that his health suffered in consequence.

Once released from the "dunkle Welt" of adulthood, he slipped back easily into the dependent attitude of childhood. Because his friend, Demian, demanded that he give up this dependent existence and follow the dictates of his own nature, he avoided for a time any contact with the older boy. His first bitter experience in disobedience and disregard for his parents' wishes filled him with a sense of fear. He lacked the courage to strike out again for himself, since this first venture into independence had proved so great a failure. Yet he felt constantly within him the urge to develop his own powers, and this he could not do in the sheltered, restricted life of the family.

Under such circumstances of conflict the individual must either adjust his personality to meet the demands of his environment, or he must change his environment to harmonize with the demands of his own nature. Emil was unable to make either of these adjustments satisfactorily and for a time he led "das Doppelleben eines Kindes, das doch kein Kind mehr ist."

His continued disregard for his parents' wishes and the sadness which he realized he was causing them filled him with misery. To offset this mental wretchedness he resorted to the compensatory attitude of indifference. The louder his conscience cried out to him against his wild carousing, the harder he set himself against it.

The emotions of youth are as fickle and as contradictory as they are intense. It needed only the sight of "Beatrice" to bring about a complete metamorphasis in the boy. His attitude of indifference and of disregard for the approval of others was changed suddenly into an attitude of idealism and adoration. Every action, every thought was made to conform to what he considered worthy of Beatrice. He found happiness in submission to the authority of her demands upon him, for this new submission was a voluntary one, not a superimposed one, as had been that of his parents. The demands she made were also in harmony with his own nature and he could meet them without conflict.

Just as in religion the youth finds an outlet for his emotional life and conforms readily to its demands, so in his adoration of Beatrice, his self-imagined ideal, the boy Emil found peace. For his painting of Beatrice was the embodiment of his own inner self. "Es war das, was mein Leben ausmachte, es war mein Inneres, mein Schicksal oder mein Dämon. So würde mein Freund aussehen, wenn ich je einen fände, so würde meine Geliebte aussehen, wenn ich je eine bekäme, so würde mein Leben und mein Tod sein, dies war der Klang und Rhythmus meines Lebens."[1]

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1. Demian, p 131

From the time of this discovery, life for Emil took on new purpose. He had an aim toward which to strive. His activities were directed along a well-defined path, the path that should lead him to an understanding of himself. Conflicts fell away in the one all-absorbing quest for self-expression. A harmonious, well-integrated personality was the result.

According to Hesse's philosophy of life, this striving for self-expression, for an understanding of one's self, is the all-important duty of every individual. All other duties are subsidiary to it. All others should contribute to its fulfilment. It is the theme of many of his stories.

While Emil, like most of Hesse's characters, is an unusual youth in many respects, his struggles and conflicts are those of the average adolescent, though they are exaggerated to conform to the highly sensitive, subjective temperament the author depicts. The boy echoes so many of the vaguely formulated fears and fancies that have bothered our own childhood. We have all felt the urge of the forbidden; all have yielded to the temptations of other children more versed in the ways of the "andere Welt" than we. We have all felt that some little misdeed, some little lie, perhaps, must surely condemn us to eternal separation from all that is good and honorable. We all know the suffering of the young sinner who yearns for a mother's sympathy and understanding, yet would not confide in her nor confess his guilt to her for anything in the world.

The average youth meets these conflicts more easily than did Emil. Yet they must be met, and it is during the years of adolescence that the individual's attitude toward the solution of his problems is largely determined. A system of reactionary attitudes efficiently built up during this period assures in most cases a successful adulthood.

Hesse's short story, Kinderseele, deals with the same types of mental conflict as those described in Demian. The young hero of Kinderseele, like Emil Sinclair, has begun to feel the call of the world "beyond." Like Emil, he must decide a conflict of allegiances. In charming language Hesse describes the struggles of the boy to bring his personality into a harmonious conformity with the situations and problems of life.

"Manchmal handeln wir, gehen aus und ein, tun dies und das, und es ist alles leicht, unbeschwert und gleichsam unverbindlich, es könnte scheinbar alles auch anders sein. Und manchmal, zu anderen Stunden, könnte nichts anders sein, ist nichts unverbindlich und leicht, und jeder Atemzug, den wir tun, ist von Gewalten bestimmt und schwer von Schicksal.

"Die Taten unseres Lebens, die wir die Guten nennen und von denen zu erzählen uns leicht fällt, sind fast alle von jener ersten, 'leichten' Art, und wir vergessen sie leicht. Andere Taten, von denen zu sprechen uns Hühe macht, vergessen wir nie mehr, sie sind gewissermassen mehr unser als andere, und ihre Schatten fallen lang über alle Tage unseres Lebens. ....."Als ich elf Jahre alt war, kam ich eines Tages von der Schule her nach Hause, an einem von den Tagen, wo Schicksal in den Ecken lauert, wo leicht etwas passiert. An diesen Tagen scheint jede Unordnung und Störung der eignene Seele sich in unserer Umwelt zu spiegeln und sie zu entstellen. Unbehagen und Angst beklemmen unser Herz, und wir suchen und finden ihre vermeintlichen Ursachen ausser uns, sehen die Welt schlecht eingerichtet und stossen überall auf Widerstände.

"Ähnlich war es an jenem Tage. Von früh an bedrückte mich-- wer weiss woher? vielleicht aus Träumen der Nacht-- ein Gefühl wie schlechtes Gewissen, obwohl ich nichts Besonderes begangen hatte. Meines Vaters Gesicht hatte am Morgen einen leidenden und vorwurfsvollen Ausdruck gehabt, die Frühstücksmilch war lau und fad gewesen. In der Schule war ich zwar nicht in Nöten geraten, aber es hatte alles wieder einmal trostlos tot und entmutigend geschmeckt und hatte sich vereinigt zu jenem mir schon bekannten Gefühl der Ohnmacht und Verzweiflung, das uns sagt, dass die Zeit endlos sei, dass wir ewig und ewig klein und machtlos und im Zwang dieser blöden, stinkenden Schule bleiben werden, Jahre und Jahre, und dass dies ganze Leben sinnlos und widerwärtig sei."

Thus Hesse describes a typical adolescent mood. The young hero of Kinderseele is a prey to a strong emotional conflict. His hitherto unquestioned submissiveness to parental authority and control is being challenged by a new set of desires. An older boy, whom he greatly admires, has offered him a rather questionable friendship, a friendship of which his parents would not approve, he knows, and which consequently demands a disregard for parental authority.

"Ich fühlte dunkel, dass meine Freundschaft zu Weber und seiner Sparkasse nichts war als wilde Sehnsucht nach jener 'Welt.' An Weber war nichts für mich liebenswert, als sein grosses Geheimnis, kraft dessen er den Erwachsenen näher stand als ich, mit meinen Träumen und Wünschen. Und ich fühlte voraus, dass er mich enttäuschen würde, dass es mir nicht

gelingen werde, ihm sein Geheimnis und den magischen Schlüssel zum Leben zu entreissen.

"Eben hatte er mich verlassen, und ich wusste, er ging nun nach Hause, breit und behabig, pfeifend und vergnügt, von keiner Sehnsucht, von keinen Ahnungen verdüstert. Wenn er die Dienstmägde und Fabrikler antraf und ihr rätselhaftes, vielleicht wunderbares, vielleicht verbrecherisches Leben führen sah, so war es ihm kein Rätsel und ungeheures Geheimnis, keine Gefahr, nichts Wildes und Spannendes, sondern selbstverständlich, bekannt und heimatlich wie der Ente das Wasser--- so war es. Und ich hingegen, ich würde immer nebendraussen stehen, allein und unsicher, voll von Ahnungen, aber ohne Gewissheit.

"Überhaupt, das Leben schmeckte an jenem Tage wieder einmal hoffnungslos fade, der Tag hatte etwas von einem Montag an sich, obwohl er ein Samstag war, er roch nach Montag, dreimal so lang und dreimal so öde als die anderen Tage. Verdammt und widerwärtig war dies Leben, verlogen und ekelhaft war es. Die Erwachsenen taten, als sei die Welt vollkommen und als seien sie selber Halbgötter, wir Knaben aber nichts als Auswurf und Abschaum.....

"Warum war es, dass man die Schönheit und Richtigkeit guter Vorsätze so wohl und tief erkannte und im Herzen fühlte, wenn doch beständig und immerzu das ganze Leben (die Erwachsenen einbegriffen) nach Gewöhnlichkeit stank und überall darauf eingerichtet war, das Schäbige und Gemeine triumphieren zu lassen?.....

"Ging es anderen anders? Waren die Helden, die Römer und Griechen, die Ritter, die ersten Christen--- waren diese alle andere Menschen gewesen als ich, besser, vollkommener, ohne schlechte Triebe, ausgestattet mit irgendeinem Organ, das mir fehlte, das sie hinderte, immer wieder aus dem Himmel in den Alltag, aus dem Erhabenen ins Unzulängliche und Elende zurückzufallen? War die Erbsünde jenen Helden und Heiligen unbekannt? War das Heilige und Edle nur Wenigen, Seltenen, Auserwählten möglich? Aber warum war mir, wenn ich nun also kein Auserwählter war, dennoch dieser Trieb nach dem Schönen und Adligen eingeboren, diese wilde, schluchzende Sehnsucht nach Reinheit, Güte, Tugend? War das zum Hohn? Gab es das in Gottes Welt, dass ein Mensch, ein Knabe, gleichzeitig alle hohen und alle bösen Triebe in sich hatte und leiden und verzweifeln musste, nur so als eine unglückliche und komische Figur, zum Vergnügen des zuschauenden Gottes? Gab es das? Und war dann nicht---ja war dann nicht die ganze Welt ein Teufelsspott, gerade wert, sie anzuspucken? War dann nicht Gott ein Scheusal, ein Wahnsinniger, ein dummer, widerliche Hanswurst?---Ach, und während ich mit einem Beigeschmack von Empörerwollust diese Gedanken dachte, strafte mich schon mein banges Herz durch Zittern für die Blasphemie!.....

"Alle diese Gefühle waren damals im Herzen des Kindes schon dieselben, wie sie es immer blieben: Zweifel an eignen Wert, Schwanken zwischen Selbstüberschätzung und Mutlosigkeit, zwischen weltverachtender Idealität und gewöhnlicher Sinneslust.....

"Wenn ich alle diese Gefühle und ihren qualvollen Widerstreit auf ein Grundgefühl zurückführen und mit einem einzigen Namen bezeichnen sollte, so wüsste ich kein anderes Wort als: Angst. Angst war es, Angst und Unsicherheit, was ich in allen jenen Stunden des gestörten Kinderglücks empfand. Angst vor Strafe, Angst vor dem eignen Gewissen, Angst vor Regungen meiner Seele, die ich als verboten und verbrecherisch empfand.

"Zugleich damit empfand ich in diesen Momenten stets, und so auch jetzt, eine peinliche Geniertheit, ein Misstrauen gegen jeden Beobachter, einen Drang zu Alleinsein und Sichverstecken."

To satisfy the demands of his friend, Weber, that he procure money to put in their mutual "Sparkasse," the boy decided that he must steal from his father. He slipped noiselessly into his father's study where he knew he could find some small coins.

"Innig wünschte ich, mein Vater möchte sich im Nebenzimmer rühren und hereintreten und den ganzen, grauenvollen Bann durchbrechen, der mich dämonisch zog und fesselte. O käme er doch! Käme er doch scheltend meinetwegen, aber käme er nur, ehe es zu spät ist!"

This conflict of desires within him was the basis of a tremendous emotional strain. The power of the "dunkle Welt" was the stronger, however, and the boy stole the money from his father's desk. So miserable did the realization of his guilt make him that his parents thought him ill and put him to bed. There he sought refuge from the reality of the

situation in the world of day-dreams.

"Schlimmeres könnte kein Mensch ertragen. Wenn noch Schlimmeres über einen kam, dann musste man sich das Leben nehmen. Es war überhaupt besser, tot zu sein, als zu leben. Es war ja alles so falsch und hässlich.....

"Ich würde vollends im Bösen untersinken, ich würde in Trotz und Wut und wegen der sinnlosen Unerträglichkeit dieses Lebens etwas Grässliches und Entscheidendes tun, etwas Grässliches und Befreiendes, das der Angst und Quälerei ein Ende machte, für immer. Ungewiss war, was es sein würde; aber Phantasien und vorläufige Zwangsvorstellungen davon waren mir schon mehrmals verwirrend durch den Kopf gegangen, Vorstellungen von Verbrechen, mit denen ich an der Welt Rache nehmen und zugleich mich selbst preisgeben und vernichten würde. Manchmal war es mir so, als würde ich unser Haus anzünden; ungeheure Flammen schlugen mit Flügeln durch die Nacht, Häuser und Gassen wurden vom Brand ergriffen, die ganze Stadt loderte riesig gegen den schwarzen Himmel. Oder zu anderen Zeiten war das Verbrechen meiner Träume eine Rache an meinem Vater, ein Mord und grausiger Todschlag. Ich aber würde mich dann benehmen wie jener Verbrecher, jener einzige, richtige Verbrecher, den ich einmal durch die Gassen unsrer Stadt hatte führen sehen.....So wie dieser Verbrecher würde ich lächeln und den Kopf steif halten, wenn man mich ins Gericht und auf das Schafott führte, und wenn die vielen Leute um mich drängten und hohnvoll aufschrieen---- ich würde nicht ja und nicht nein sagen, einfach schweigen und

verachten.

"Und wenn ich hingerichtet und tot war und im Himmel vor den ewigen Richter kam, dann wollte ich mich keineswegs beugen und unterwerfen. Oh nein, und wenn alle Engelscharen ihn umstanden und alle Heiligkeit und Würde aus ihm strahlte! Mochte er mich verdammen, mochte er mich in Pech sieden lassen! Ich wollte mich nicht entschuldigen, mich nicht demütigen, ihn nicht um Verzeihung bitten, nichts bereuen! Wenn er mich fragte:'Hast du das und das getan?' so würde ich rufen: 'Jawohl habe ich's getan, und noch mehr, und es war recht, dass ich's getan habe, und wenn ich kann, werde ich es wieder und wieder tun. Ich habe totgeschlagen, ich habe Häuser angezündet, weil es mir Spass machte, und weil ich dich verhöhnen und ärgern wollte. Ja, denn ich hasse dich, ich spucke dir vor die Füsse, Gott. Du hast mich gequält und geschunden, du hast Gesetze gegeben, die niemand halten kann, du hast die Erwachsenen angestiftet, uns Jungen das Leben zu versauen.

"Wenn es mir glückte, mir dies vollkommen deutlich vorzustellen und fest daran zu glauben, dass es mir gelingen würde, genau so zu tun und zu reden, dann war mir für Augenblicke finster wohl.....Hin und her gingen meine Phantasien, liessen bald mich, bald Gott gewinnen, hoben mich zum unbeugsamen Verbrecher und zogen mich wieder zum Kind und Schwächling herab."

Because he had not the courage to face his parents with his secret, the boy ran away. In the solitude of the woods, he thought over the situation. "Ja, wenn ich nun nicht

mehr heimkehren würde? Es könnte ja etwas passieren, ich könnte den Hals brechen oder ertrinken oder unter die Eisenbahn kommen. Dann sah alles anders aus. Dann brachte man mich nach Hause, und alles war still und erschrocken und weinte, und ich tat allen leid, und von den Feigen (the ones he had stolen) und allem war nicht mehr die Rede."

Such was the trend of the boy's thoughts as he wandered alone through the woods. As night came on and the feeling of homesickness outweighed his dread of meeting his parents, he started home. Near his house he met the older boy, Weber, and all the inner conflict that had been going on in his mind resolved itself suddenly into a struggle against Weber.

"Aber ich war heiss und böse geworden, alle in mir angehäufte Angst und Ratlosigkeit brach in hellen Zorn aus. Weber hatte mir nichts zu sagen. Gegen ihn war ich im Recht, gegen ihn hatte ich ein gutes Gewissen. Und ich brauchte jemand, gegen den ich mich fühlen, gegen den ich stolz und im Recht sein konnte. Alles Ungeordnete und Finstere in mir strömte wild in diesen Ausweg----Ich tat, was ich sonst so sorgfältig vermied, ich kehrte den Herrensohn heraus, ich deutete an, dass es für mich keine Entbehrung sei, auf die Freundschaft mit einem Gassenbuben zu verzichten-----Ich fühlte mich aufglühen und aufleben: ich hatte einen Feind, einen Gegner, einen der schuld war, den man packen konnte! Alle Lebenstriebe sammelten sich in diese erlösende, willkommene, befreiende Wut, in die grimmige

Freude am Feind, der diesmal nicht in mir selbst wohnte, der mir gegenüberstand, mich mit erschreckten, dann mit bösen Augen anglotzte, dessen Stimme ich hörte, dessen Vorwürfe ich verachtete, dessen Schimpfworte ich übertrumpfen konnte."

A bloody fist-fight ensued. "Tränen liefen mir aus den Augen und Blut über den Mund.....Die Welt aber war herrlich, sie hatte einen Sinn, es war gut zu leben, gut zu hauen, gut zu bluten und bluten zu machen."

Thus the boy obtained release from his brooding, through activity. At home he was put to bed. The next day his father discovered the theft. "Wenn ein Vater, so wie es in Geschichten und Traktätchen vorkam, im Zorn oder in der Betrunkenheit seine Kinder furchtbar prügelte, so war er eben in Unrecht, und wenn die Prügel auch weh taten, so konnte man innerlich die Achseln zucken und ihn verachten. Bei meinem Vater ging das nicht, er war zu fein, zu einwandfrei, er war nie in Unrecht! Ihm gegenüber wurde man immer klein und elend.

"Einen Augenblick lang war mir selbst die Lage vollkommen klar, im Unbewussten, doch hätte ich es nicht mit Worten sagen können. Es war so: ich hatte gestohlen, weil ich trostbedürftig in Vaters Zimmer gekommen war und es zu meiner Enttäuschung leer gefunden hatte. Ich hatte nicht stehlen wollen. Ich hatte, als der Vater nicht da war, nur spionieren wollen, mich unter seinen Sachen umsehen, seine Geheimnisse belauschen, etwas über ihn

erfahren. So war es. Dann lagen die Feigen da, und ich stahl. Und sofort bereute ich, und den ganzen Tag gestern hatte ich Qual und Verzweiflung gelitten, hatte zu sterben gewünscht, hatte mich verurteilt, hatte gute, neue Vorsätze gefasst.....

"Hätte ich ihm das klagen können, so hätte er mich verstanden. Aber auch Kinder, so sehr sie den Grossen an Klugheit überlegen sind, stehen einsam und ratlos vor dem Schicksal.....Ich konnte nur nicken."

After his father had punished him for his misdeed, he reconciled himself to the boy. "Und als ich im Bette lag, hatte ich die Gewissheit, dass er mir ganz und vollkommen verziehen habe-----vollkommener als ich ihm."

Like Demian, this character-study reveals many of the personality tendencies and conflicts of adolescence. Again we have the beginnings of a new rebellion against blind obedience to the authority of the parents. This impulse set up an intense emotional conflict, a conflict of loyalties. The child in Kinderseele felt the urge for independence, the call of the "other" world, though he did not understand it. To him the rebellion in his heart meant that he was depraved, or at least had the elements of depravity within him. This disquieting conclusion preyed upon his mind, making him completely miserable, He was filled with a brooding fear and dread. It is this "Angst", which Hesse so feelingly describes, that makes life difficult for even a normal youth. He is assailed by so many conflicting emotions, faced by so many inconsistencies, that he hardly knows where to turn. He does not know which of his new impulses are good and which

are bad; which to encourage and which to restrain. In his inexperience he gropes about blindly seeking to satisfy his desires. The realization of his inability to meet the problems of life adequately fills him with a feeling of inferiority and insecurity.

To compensate for this feeling the child may assume a character or an attitude not his own. Just as Emil Sinclair sought release from his conflicting impulses in an attitude of indifference, so the boy in Kinderseele sought a refuge from the realities of life's situations in a world of day-dreams. Such day-dreaming constitutes one of the most common escape mechanisms; the individual, in his fancies, imagines that the situation is just as he would have it; instead of being the inferior individual, he becomes the superior one. He realizes in fancy what he has failed to realize in reality. The boy standing before God and defying God to punish him for a deed which, he boasted, was perfectly justifiable; the boy lying dead, wept over by loving, repentent parents, forgiven absolutely; the boy explaining to an understanding father that he had done no great wrong in stealing because he had had no desire to steal; these creatures of the imagination represent what he would like to be himself, courageous, loved and understood by his parents, at heart always virtuous. When the boy was able to convince himself of the reality of these day-dreams, "dann war mir für Augenblicke finster wohl."

The feeling of inferiority in the young adolescent is a difficult one to conquer. Everything contributes to

make him realize his incapacities. The experience and the "perfection" of his parents, his own failures and weaknesses, his fears, his inexperience, his realization of his lack of understanding of life, all are factors in making him feel his inefficiency. The successes that come to one as the years go by aid much in dispelling this sense of inferiority. But in youth it is a strong emotional force. The problem of overcoming it is one of the greatest problems of adolescence.

While many of the tendencies of adolescence tend to break down the personality unless they are properly directed, there are others that contribute towards an efficient maturity. These tendencies must also be controlled, lest they assume too important a role in the youth's experience and thereby handicap him. Such characteristics of youth as the tendency to hero-worship or toward idealism of any kind; the urge for self-expression; the awakening of the love instinct; all are active forces in the individual's development. These characteristics are delightfully portrayed in a number of Hesse's short stories.

Der Weltverbesserer is the story of a youth whose attitude toward life was permeated by a spirit of reform. When he found that he could not change the world to suit him, he withdrew from it to the life of a recluse. This situation proved unsatisfactory, however, and since his craving for companionship outweighed his desire to live in a perfect world, he returned to active participation in the life about him.

It is in Narziss und Goldmund that Hesse most sympathetically depicts the tendency toward hero-worship. In Goldmund's adoration of his teacher, in Emil Sinclair's admiration for Demian, in Peter Camenzind's devotion to his friend, Richard, Hesse reveals an intimate understanding of this quality of youth.

Der Zyklon, a charming study of an adolescent mood, describes the yearnings of a boy just entering adolescence,

no longer interested in the attractions of childhood, not understanding the turbulent emotions he feels so strongly, hesitating upon the threshhold of a new life, wondering what the future may hold for him. His day-dreams are interrupted by a cyclone, in the midst of which he experiences the awakening of a new love, for the girl Berta, thinking herself in love with him, seekd refuge from the storm in his arms. The author likens the storm-beaten, uprooted trees left by the cyclone to the heart of the young lad, rocked by emotions new to him, the habits of childhood broken, the roots that bound him to a care-free, happy childhood torn by the force of the storm.

Though he deals with the question of adolescent love in but few of his stories, Hesse describes a love that is intensely emotional, a primitive, physical passion. There is nothing tender in this love, nothing lasting. It is an overwhelming, physical force, accompanied by violent emotion. Such a love is typical of adolescence. The demands of modern civilization require that such impulses be sublimated until maturity for the good of society. However, they are present in tantalizing strength during the adolescent years and the question of their sublimation is one of the ever-present problems of society.

"All our lives long, every day and every hour, we are engaged in the process of accommodating our changed and unchanged selves to changed and unchanged surroundings; living, in fact, is nothing else than this process of accommodation; when we fail in it a little we are stupid, when we fail flagrantly we are mad, when we suspend it temporarily we sleep, when we give up the attempt altogether we die. In quiet, uneventful lives the changes internal and external are so small that there is little or no strain in the process of fusion and accommodation; in other lives there is great strain, but there is also great fusing and accommodating power; in others great strain with little accommodating power. A life will be successful or not according as the power of accommodation is equal to or unequal to the strain of fusing and adjusting internal and external changes."[1]

With these words Samuel Butler states the problem that confronts every individual in the process of his development. According to Hesse's philosophy of life it is the duty of each individual to strive to understand himself and to seek self-expression along the lines of his inborn nature. Many of his characters fail to "find" themselves or to accommodate their natures to the demands of life. Such individuals, victims of maladjustment, fall by the wayside.

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1. Butler, Samuel, The Way of All Flesh, The Macmillan Co., 1925, p 329

The child is born with a fund of instinctive traits and impulses. As these instinctive tendencies are called into action in his responses to his environment, he learns that some of them are beneficial and some harmful; some bring about the results that he desires and others fail in this respect. The tendencies that prove to bring about satisfactory situations he strengthens by repeated use; those which prove undesirable he learns to weaken by disuse or to discard altogether. Thus his native equipment is modified to meet the demands of his environment.

Not only must these inherited traits be modified, but they must be organized into a functional unit of behavior in which the less significant and useful traits are subordinated to the more important ones. Otherwise some one trait, perhaps a relatively unimportant one, may assume proportions entirely out of keeping with its significance and thereby interfere with the functioning of other tendencies more essential to the individual's development. Through unwise guidance or by undue emphasis on some one unimportant trait, the entire perspective of the person may become warped and distorted.

By means of these mental adjustments the individual is gradually brought into harmony with his environment and the demands of his own nature. While this adaptation is never complete in any individual, a person's efficiency may be measured by the extent to which he has been able to adjust his native equipment to the demands of his

environment, by the extent to which he is prepared to meet the situations of life.

When an individual fails in his attempt at adjustment he may take one of two courses; he may flee from the situation or he may face it defiantly and refuse to accept it. The child who resorts to seclusiveness, to such compensatory mechanisms as day-dreaming, rationalization, and in severe cases to nervousness, insanity and even death, is one who cannot face the facts of life squarely and who flees from them. The child who defiantly refuses to obey, who insists upon breaking the laws and conventions of society, who assumes a "don't care" attitude, is also a child who is unable to adjust his nature to his environment, or perhaps better, to adjust his environment to meet the demands of his nature. Continued failure to meet the demands of life results in a broken personality.

The adolescent is still in the formative period of development. He has not yet learned to modify his impulses effectively nor to evaluate them properly. His conduct is inconsistent and often contradictory. He has had to learn through a process of trial and error which of his reactions bring him satisfaction and which lead to undesirable results. He is still in the process of learning.

In his novel, Unterm Rad, Hesse takes up the problem of the maladjusted individual. Hans Giebenrath, the hero of the story, represents the youth who, through lack of understanding and unwise guidance on the part of his father and his teachers, never learned to cope with the situations of life.

Hans' failure to adjust himself to his environment had its basis in his intellectual superiority over his schoolmates. At a very early age he was set apart from the other children and made the special pupil of his teacher and his rector, in order that he might be prepared to take the "Landexamen" for the seminary. Thus unwise emphasis was placed upon his intellectual ability and his desire to excel in his studies took on proportions entirely out of keeping with its importance. This desire conflicted with the boy's natural impulses; the instinctive urge to share in the play activities of the other boys conflicted with the acquired desire to shut himself up with his books and was finally subordinated to it. But the conflict showed itself in an increasing shyness and sensitiveness and an extreme nervousness. No one seemed to see any danger signals in his big, tired eyes, his thin body, or his frequent head-aches. The examination was all-important. Everything else must be sacrificed to it.

During his first month at the seminary Hans had one all-absorbing desire: to stand at the head of his classes. But he soon came under the influence of Fritz Heilner, who ridiculed Hans' pedantic attitude toward learning. He showed Hans how the beauty of poetry like the Iliad and the Odyssey was spoiled by the emphasis on conjugations and syntax.

Under his influence Hans began to question the desirability of his intense studiousness and again a conflict arose. His ambition to excel in his school-work was incompatible with his desire to be respected by the friend whom he adored. His studies suffered in consequence. His teachers unwisely forbade him to associate with Fritz because of what they considered the boy's bad influence. However, Hans' devotion to his friend was for a time the strongest motive force of his being. To everything that conflicted with that devotion he turned a defiant back. The result was disastrous. He became unmanageable, failed utterly in his school-work, and refused to listen to the appeals and threats of his teachers. The intense emotional conflict which the situation produced finally brought about a complete nervous break-down and he was forced to leave school.

At home, with a father who understood him even less than his teachers, he spent his days in solitary brooding. His failure to prove himself worthy of his father's ambition for him and to realize his own aspirations weighed continuously upon his mind.

His father, keenly disappointed in his son's failure to become a scholar and teacher of renown, finally apprenticed him to a blacksmith. Here again the boy found the conditions of his environment absolutely incompatible with his own nature. It was impossible for him to adjust himself to the demands of the new life, and in hopeless despair, he committed suicide.

In the character of Hans Giebenrath Hesse has pictured a youth who failed to accommodate his nature to an environment he was unable to change. His trouble started with the undue emphasis placed by his teachers on his unusual intellectual ability, an emphasis that was entirely out of proportion to its significance. In order to develop a well-rounded individual it is essential to bring out such traits as will make for a balanced personality. In the adolescent boy these traits are strengthened normally as much by association with other children in their games of give-and-take and in the character-molding activities of boyhood, as by the directed training of the school-room. However, in order that Hans might be well equipped for his studies in the seminary, the social side of his nature was entirely neglected. He was allowed no time for play with other children and his isolation from them by reason of his being set apart for a special training, naturally set up a barrier between him and them.

When his friendship with Fritz Heilner demanded that he renounce the narrow, restrictive life and attitude of the scholar, he was forced to make a choice between two all-absorbing desires, for it was impossible to bring them into harmony with one another. So the boy whose one great ambition had been to appear well in the sight of his teachers came to disregard altogether his teachers' opinions and defiantly met their pleas with indiffernce and disrespect.

Such a condition could not last for any length of time. The tendencies for submission to the wishes of his

teachers and the desire for their approval had become so strongly fixed that they could not easily be sublimated or disregarded. The nervous break-down that resulted was the only way left by which the boy could escape from the realities of the situation., from the conflict which he could not settle.

Had his father understood his son, he might have helped him to reconstruct his life in order to make it consistent with his nature. But the father thought only of the boy's failure, as did Hans himself, and the months of solitary brooding over this failure merely served to increase his sense of inferiority.

His apprenticeship to a blacksmith and the demands of a life requiring rough manual labor for which he was entirely unfitted resulted in the complete break-down of his personality. His death by suicide was the tragic outcome of his inability to solve adequately the problems which life presented.

The boy hero of Rosshalde, a novel, is another victim of a poorly adjusted personality. His father, an artist, loved his child devotedly, but he was so absorbed in his painting that he had little time for the boy. The mother was partial to an older son, Albert, and though she, too, loved the young Pierre, she found him extremely hard to understand. Because of these circumstances the child was left largely to his own devices. Isolated from other children by reason of his parents' wealth and the size of their beautiful estate, Rosshalde, he was intensely lonely.

Hesse describes thus the feelings of the boy as he wandered about the estate, seeking relief from this oppressive loneliness. "Unterdessen war Pierre, der sich wirklich nicht wohl fühlte und am Morgen weit später als sonst und ohne Lebensfreude erwacht war, solange im Kinderzimmer bei seinen Spielsachen geblieben, bis es ihm langweilig wurde. Es war ihm ziemlich elend zumute und ihm schien, es müsse heute schon etwas Besonderes geschehen und sich einfinden, damit dieser geschmacklose Tag erträglich und ein bisschen hübsch werde.

"Unruhig zwischen Erwartung und Misstrauen ging er aus dem Hause und in den Lindengarten, auf der Suche nach irgend etwas Neuem, nach irgendeinem Fund oder Abenteuer. Sein Magen war öde, das kannte er aus früheren Erfahrungen, und sein Kopf war müde und schwer, wie er ihn noch nie gefühlt hatte, und am liebsten hätte er sich an der Mutter Knie geflüchtet und geheult. Allein das ging nicht solange der stolze, grosse Bruder da war, der ihn ohnehin immer fühlen liess, dass er noch ein kleiner Rub sei.

"Wenn es nur der Mutter eingefallen wäre, von sich aus etwas zu tun, ihn zu rufen und ihm ein Spiel vorzuschlagen, und nett mit ihm zu sein! Aber die war jetzt natürlich wieder mit Albert gegangen. Pierre fühlte, es war heute ein Unglückstag und wenig zu hoffen.

"Mit gerunzelter Stirne schaute er am Boden umher, stocherte mit den Schuhspitzen im Klies und schleuderte eine graue schleimige Wegschnecke mit dem Fuss weit fort ins nasse Gras. Es wollte nichts zu ihm sprechen, kein Vogel noch Schmetterling, nichts wollte ihn anlachen und ihn zur Fröhlichkeit verführen. Alles schwieg, alles sah alltäglich, hoffnungslos und schäbig aus.....

"Seufzend schlenderte der Knabe weiter, das hübsche, zarte Gesicht erloschen und voll Kummer. Als er jenseits der hohen Spalierwand die Stimmen Alberts und der Mutter hörte, überfiel ihn Eifersucht und Widerwillen so stark, dass er Tränen in die Augen bekam. Er kehrte um und ging ganz leise, um nicht gehört und angerufen zu werden. Er wollte jetzt niemand Rede stehen, er wollte von niemand zum Reden und Aufmerken und Artigsein genötigt werden. Es ging ihm schlecht, jämmerlich schlecht, und niemand kümmerte sich um ihn, so wollte er wenigstens die Vereinsamung und Trauer auskosten und sich richtig elend fühlen.

"Er dachte auch an den lieben Gott, den er zu Zeiten sehr schätzte, und einen Augenblick brachte der Gedanke einen fernen Schimmer von Trost und Wärme, aber das sank schnell wieder unter. Wahrscheinlich war es mit dem lieben Gott auch nichts. Und doch hätte er gerade jetzt so sehr jemand

gebraucht, auf den ein Verlass war und von dem man sich etwas Hübsches und Tröstliches versprechen dürfte.

"Da fiel ihm der Vater ein. Es war ein ahnungsvolles Gefühl, dass der ihn vielleicht verstehen konnte, da er selber meistens still und gespannt und unfroh aussah. Der Vater stand ohne Zweifel, so wie immer, in seinem grossen, stillen Atelier drüben und malte an seinen Bildern. Da war es eigentlich nicht gut, ihn zu stören, aber er hatte erst ganz kürzlich gesagt, Pierre solle nur immer zu ihm kommen, wenn es ihn gelüste.....Vielleicht hatte er es wieder vergessen, alle Erwachsenen vergassen ja ihre Versprechungen immer so bald wieder.....aber versuchen konnte man es einmal. Lieber Gott, wenn man doch durchaus keinen anderen Trost wusste und es so nötig hatte!

"Langsam erst, dann in aufglimmender Hoffnung rascher und straffer ging er den schattigen Weg zum Atelier.... Vorsichtig drückte er die Klinke herab, öffnete die Tür geräuschlos und steckte den Kopf hinein.....

"Beim Einschlappen der Klinke zuckte der Maler, von Pierre aufmerksam beobachtet, mit den breiten Schultern und wendete den Kopf zurück. Die scharfen Augen blickten beleidigt und fragend herüber, und der Mund stand unangenehm offen.....

'Sieh da, Pierre! Hat Mama dich hergeschickt?'

Der Knabe schüttelte den Kopf.

'Willst du ein wenig bei mir sein und zusehen?' fragte der Vater freundlich. Zugleich wandte er sich wieder seinem Bilde zu und zielte scharf mit einem spitzen Pinselchen auf einen Fleck. Pierre sah zu. Er sah den Maler auf seine

Leinwand blicken, sah seine Augen gespannt und wie zornig starren und seine starke, nervöse Hand mit dem dünnen Pinsel zielen, er sah ihn die Stirnfalten spannen und die Unterlippe mit den Zähnen fassen.....

"Seine Augen erloschen, und er blieb wie gelähmt bei der Tür stehen. Er kannte das alles, diese Augen und diese Grimassen der Aufmerksamkeit, und er wusste, es war töricht gewesen, zu erwarten, dass es heute anders sei als immer.....

"Er hatte es ja gewusst! Es gab keine Zuflucht für ihn, bei der Mutter nicht und hier erst recht nicht.

"Eine Minute lang stand er gedankenlos und traurig und blickte, ohne etwas zu sehen, auf das grosse Bild mit den spiegelnd nassen Farben. Dafür hatte Papa Zeit, für ihn nicht. Er nahm die Klinke wieder in die Hand und drückte sie nieder, um still davon zu gehen."

In addition to the loneliness occasioned by his feeling of not being wanted, was the ever-present realization of an antagonism between his father and his mother, both of whom he adored. So intolerable had his parents found one another's company that his father had taken up his abode in a summer house on the estate. Aside from the very formal occasions of dinner which the father took with his family and in which the controlled hatred the parents felt for each other manifested itself in a cold politeness, the boy seldom saw his parents together. This coldness on the part of two people whom he loved led to a feeling of insecurity in the child; he felt that the antagonism between them was incompatible with his love for them.

It was a problem he could not understand.

A less sensitive boy would have found release from his loneliness and depression in the normal activities of boyhood. In Pierre, however, Hesse has pictured a boy who was by nature sensitive, subjective to the point of introversion. These tendencies were strengthened by the fact of his isolation from other children and by the lack of understanding of his condition by his parents. Normal children suffer to a graeter or less degree from such feelings of insecurity and loneliness. Yet in the process of development and adjustment these feelings are submerged and in time largely forgotten.

An understanding parent could have done much toward sublimating such undesirable tendencies in his child, In Pierre these tendencies were strengthened day by day until the boy was finally completely overwhelmed by them. There was no escape for him, no evasion. His emotional condition became at last so intense that a severe case of brain fever developed and in the end caused his death. Like Hans Giebenrath of Unterm Rad he failed to adjust his nature to an environment he could not change.

Die Verlobung is the story of a youth who was the victim of a type of infantilism, another personality disturbance. As a child, Andreas had been completely dominated by his mother. His playthings were the discarded dolls and toys of an older sister. His mother had taught him how to do such household tasks as would lighten her work. The rough games of the other boys had no attraction for him and he developed into a shy, rather cowardly, altogether unpopular youth. In spite of his extreme sensitiveness and sense of inferiority he was intensely "girl-crazy,"and in his aunt's dry-goods shop where he found employment he had ample opportunity to fall madly in love with first one and then another fair customer. His feelings were always disguised, however, behind a veil of exaggerated courtesy, which amused the girls considerably and contributed to the impression he gave of being extremely effeminate.

The years of adolescence passed and even during his young manhood Andreas never reached the point where he dared declare his love to any girl. At the age of thirty he was still unmarried and still girl-crazy. His meticulous manner of dressing, his artificially curled hair, his carefully thought out and stilted expressions, his awkward attempts to gain social approval by offering his high-pitched and quavering voice to the church choir---all were the occasion for good-natured twittering and smiling from his much admired girl acquaintances.

His mother sought to bring about an engagement between her son and the "schöne Margarete", but the girl

only laughed at the idea. Finally Paula, a plain, friendly young woman of his own age, who had always been kind to Andreas, made it clear to the man that she loved him, and he gratefully accepted her.

In this story Hesse shows how an over-solicitous and domineering mother can ruin her son's personality and hamper his life. The normal adolescent naturally breaks away from the authority of his parents in his progress toward an independent life. The child who is dominated by his mother, who has no opportunity to learn to get along with other children of his age, is stunted in his social development and handicapped in his efforts to "find" himself.

Walther Kömpff, the hero of a short story by the same name, is another victim of an emotional conflict. His father, a merchant, died when Walther was ten or eleven years old. On his death-bed the father exacted from his son a promise to carry on the business which had come down to him through three generations of business men. However, Walther had inherited from his mother a sensitive, rather temperamental nature, entirely unfitted to cope with the cold, unyielding laws of business.

True to his promise, Walther took over his father's store as soon as he had finished his school work. He revolted against the hard methods of business dealing, against the confinements of a merchant's life. His only companions were his mother, on whom he was most dependent for sympathy and understanding, and a middle-aged servant, Lise.

He spent his evenings brooding over the hardness of his lot and in seeking release from his unhappy state in religion. His mother's death was the first disintegrating force, for after she had gone, he had no one on whom to depend. Finally he came to the conclusion that, since he had faithfully sought for an understanding of God and had not found Him, there could be no God. "Aber ich habe ein Verlangen nach Gott gehabt-- nach dem Herrgott, Lies. Den hab' ich finden wollen, dem bin ich nachgelaufen, und jetzt bin ich so weit, dass ich nimmer zurück kann--- verstehst du? Nimmer zurück. Und alles ist ein Lug gewesen.

"Lass mich reden.--Nun, still! Oder bist du das Leben lang ihm nachgelaufen? Hast du hundert und hundert Nächte in der Bibel gelesen? Hast du Gott tausendmal auf den Knieen gebeten, dass er dich höre, dass er deine Opfer annehme und dir ein klein wenig Licht und Frieden dafür gebe? Hast du das? Und hast du deine Freunde verloren---um Gott näher zu kommen, und deine Ehre und deinen Beruf hingeworfen, um Gott zu sehen? Ich habe das getan, alles das und viel mehr, und wenn Gott lebendig wäre und hätte auch so viel Herz und Gerechtigkeit wie der alte Beckeler, so hätte er mich angeblickt.

"Aber er hat nichts gesehen. Nicht er hat mich geprüft, sondern ich ihn, und ich habe gefunden, dass er ein Märlein ist. Eine Kinderfabel, weisst du."

This discovery left to Kömpff but one last means of escape from an unbearable situation, the final escape of death.

In Kömpff's case, the conflict between the demands of his inherited nature and those of his father were irreconcilable.

He could not adjust his personality to harmonize with his environment and his promise to his father made it impossible for him to change his environment. Not realizing that the longing which continually consumed his being was a longing for self-expression along the lines of his natural tendencies, he sought escape from his conflict in a search for God. As long as religion offered to him a refuge from the realities of life, living was for him bearable, even though he found little happiness in it. But with the death of his mother and his conclusion that there could be no God, his last means of escape from an unbearable situation was cut off, his mind gave way, and on the verge of insanity, he committed suicide.

The danger of deciding for a child what his life work is to be lies in this very fact: in order for a person to achieve happiness in life, his work must not be out of harmony with his nature. One must have a purpose by which to shape his life, an aim toward which to direct his activities. And unless this purpose, this aim, is compatible with one's nature, happiness will not be the outcome.

Augustus is the story of a boy whose mother wished for him at birth "dass alle Menschen dich liebhaben müssen." The privilege of naming a wish for her son was granted the mother by a queer little old man, her neighbor. The boy grew up, loved by everyone. Everything he did, no matter how naughty, was excused by his admiring playmates and their parents. The child became accordingly very selfish and wilful. At an early age he showed a decided tendency to consider only his own wants and to disregard altogether the rights and happiness of others. This tendency grew to such proportions that in his early manhood he was conscious of no social demands. Respect for the rights of his associates had no part in his entirely self-centered life.

His love for a married woman who, though she returned his love, insisted upon absolute faithfulness to her husband, taught him the lesson which his experiences up to that time had failed even to suggest to him. In his despair he was on the point of committing suicide, when the little old man appeared and Augustus begged him, "Nimm den alten Zauber von mir, der mir nicht geholfen hat, und gib mir dafür, dass ich die Menschen liebhaben kann."

No longer was he the object of men's love. In poverty and illness he wandered about, jeered at, scorned, but he loved the people who derided him. Finally, worn out and on the verge of death, he sought refuge at the old man's fireside. There he died in peace and contentment, having learned the lesson that happiness comes from loving and serving, not from being served.

While the story is half fairy-tale, Hesse has shown the effect of "spoiling" during the formative years. Augustus had never met with the opposition which life affords. He had not learned which of his tendencies would bring him satisfaction and social approval, because everything he did met with approval. Life had offered him no opportunity to choose between situations, no conflicts to solve, no opposition. When, therefore, in the course of time he finally met a situation that he could not control, he broke down under it and was on the verge of suicide.

It is during childhood and adolescence, the formative periods, that the individual is exposed to such situations as challenge his ability to adjust himself to his environment.. The manner in which he faces these situations, his reactions to them, determine the manner in which he will meet the problems of adulthood. The child who is constantly protected, who is never forced to make his own decisions, whose parents stand always between him and the buffeting forces of life, is unprepared to meet efficiently the problems which, sooner or later, will inevitably fall to his lot.

As a background for his novel, Narziss und Goldmund, Hesse has chosen the life in a monastic school. Narziss, a young monk, was a scholar, temperamentally very honest, thorough, conscientious, conservative, undemonstrative, and an unusually clear thinker. He had one great love, outside his love for his work and for his religion, and that was for the boy Goldmund, his pupil. Goldmund was of an entirely different type from that of the teacher he adored. He was sensitive, artistic, dreamy, undependable, with fickle, intense emotions. His love for Narziss amounted to hero-worship. In order to receive a word of praise from his teacher he would study for hours on a hated Latin lesson.

"Warum war es ihm gelungen, sich der lateinischen Syntax so unermüdlich zu ergeben, und alle diese griechischen Aoriste zu erlernen, die ihm im Herzensgrunde doch wirklich nicht wichtig waren?..... Es war die Liebe gewesen, die ihn damals gestählt und beflügelt hatte; sein Lernen war nichts anders gewesen als ein inständiges Werben um Narziss, und dessen Liebe war nur auf dem Wege der Achtung und Anerkennung zu erwerben gewesen. Damals konnte er für einen anerkennenden Blick des geliebten Lehrers stunden-und tagelang sich mühen."

Narziss saw in the boy the potential talents of an artist. He realized that Goldmund was by nature quite unlike himself, and that the youth's desire to become a monk was based upon his admiration for his teacher. So he taught Goldmund that he must follow the impulses of his own nature and find his calling in line with his temperament.

However, Narziss failed to impress upon the youth the lesson of self-control. In teaching him that he must follow the dictates of his heart, that he must "be himself", he neglected to teach him that this self-expression must be in conformity with the demands of his environment as well as of his own nature. So the youth cast aside the restrictions of social convention, disregarded the rights of others, seeking only the satisfaction of self-expression, which he felt was to be found in love. He became, to be sure, a great sculptor. He succeeded in expressing in his work all the tenderness and depth of feeling of his nature, a depth of feeling that a more restrained life might perhaps never have experienced. As an artist he was great. As a man he was a failure, restless, ever tormented by his unrestrained emotions. Though he gave to the world a thing of beauty, he died on a vain quest for happiness.

Again this failure to accomplish a satisfactory adjustment to life's situations was the result of faulty training during the adolescent years. In his desire to show Goldmund that he was not by nature destined for the priesthood, with its sacrifices and its abnegations of self, Narziss failed to take into consideration the fact that a temperament such as Goldmund's must be kept under control and must be brought into harmony with the social world about it, though, to be sure, it need not necessarily conform to the superficial demands of society. There are many who believe that an artistic soul cannot produce its noblest work when it is restrained in any way. Whether this be true or not, it is undeniably a fact

that a happy life is the result of a harmony between an individual's nature and his environment. This harmony Goldmund failed to realize.

III. Though adolescence ushers in no abrupt changes in the individual's development, there are present in adolescence certain traits or tendencies which, when properly directed, contribute to an adequate preparation for adulthood. There are other tendencies which, if they are not sublimated or discarded, will lead to failure in development and to the disintegration of the personality.

Among the positive tendencies or those which further progress when properly trained, are the tendency to idealism, hero-worship, religious enthusiasm, and a desire for helping to better the world. The urge for self-expression, for breaking away from parental control, for "doing as one pleases", is a provision by nature to prepare one for meeting the problems of maturity. The sex instinct, newly awakened, is a strong creative force.

On the other hand, there are certain tendencies which appear more strongly in adolescence than at any other time and which must be adjusted, redirected, sublimated, or discarded altogether. Chief among these is the tendency to feel inferior and insecure in the face of life situations. Such mechanisms as lying, day-dreaming, rationalization, may compensate for a time, but their effect is merely temporary and if they are carried to extremes, the individual fails in his attempt at adjustment.

Failure in life is often the result of personality disturbances. Repressions, mental conflicts, lack of understanding by parents and teachers, extreme "mothering",

intense loneliness, defiance of the demands of society, all may result in broken personalities.

In his novels and short stories Hesse describes with great feeling and sympathy the emotions and conflicts of youth. His writings reveal a keen understanding of adolescent psychology. Some of his characters succeed in bringing their natures into harmony with their environments. Most of them, however, fail in this difficult adjustment.

Because of the autobiographical nature of Hesse's writings, most of his youths are the reflections of his own personality, sensitive, subjective, poetic, and highly emotional. The normal activities of youth take care of most of these adolescent conflicts. Hesse himself doubtless finds an outlet for his emotional difficulties in his writing. But his characters have no such means of escape from the realities of life. By reason of their isolation from other youths, they are forced to find the solutions for their problems within themselves, become subjective and introvertive, and in the end many of them fail utterly. In them the conflicts of youth are exaggerated to conform to their extremely sensitive and emotional natures. But to a greater or less extent they are the universal problems of youth.

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